

**For Immediate Release**

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**JAMES IVORY HOMELESS PERSONS' MEMORIAL DAY TO BE OBSERVED**

JACKSON--Homeless persons, homeless service providers, and advocates will gather at 9:30 a.m. Friday Dec.18 at the Stewpot Community Services sanctuary, 1100 W. Capitol St. in Jackson, to observe James Ivory Homeless Persons' Memorial Day. Since 1992, this event has served to remember homeless persons who have died during the year and to call attention to the many issues of homelessness.

The event is sponsored by the Mississippi State Hospital Community Services Stubbs Homeless Program and Partners to End Homelessness in conjunction with the National Coalition for the Homeless. It is named for the late James Ivory, a former director of the Jackson-Hinds Comprehensive Health Center's Homeless Clinic, who was an ardent advocate for the homeless.

Homeless memorial services, including candlelight vigils, plays and other events, are currently conducted by about 100 communities across the United States. The events call attention to the estimated 3 ½ million people, including over a million children, who are likely to experience homelessness in a given year.

This year's Jackson's observance will include a performance of "Boxmen," a dramatic reading of a one-act play about two homeless men who reside in an elaborate cardboard box in an un-named southern city. The play was written by Linda Townes, Director of the Stubbs Homeless Program, and stars Bob Muse, a professional actor with movie, stage and television credits, who is currently homeless in Jackson, and Anthony DiFatta, well-known Jackson artist and Mississippi State Hospital art instructor.

The event will also include music, a dramatic recitation, and a memorial drumming session, as well as an update by Heather Ivery, City Project Coordinator for "Destination Home," Jackson's 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness. At the event's conclusion, lunch will be served on schedule by the Stewpot soup kitchen. For more information, call (601) 351-8523.